

HosPA/Oxford Brookes University - the 2015 survey of members

Background:

Since 1990 I have been conducting a detailed questionnaire-based survey every 5 years of the HoSPA membership, gaining a large amount of data on the changing aspects of financial management within hotels, and latterly revenue management also. The questions are mostly of the 'tick-box' variety, with some qualitative questions on the changes that have impacted on member's roles, and predictions for the future.

The latest questionnaire was launched at the HOSPACE conference in November 2015, and immediately released to members via an email link to SurveyMonkey, allowing total anonymity of respondents. Further reminders were sent in December and January 2016. Total responses were 100, out of a distribution of approximately 1,200 (although not all of these were in employment, and therefore were ineligible).

This report gives overall totals, and comparisons between groups. Separate summary reports are available for Finance managers, Revenue managers and Consultants. There were only 6 respondents in the IT management categories, and so an analysis of these was not performed. Not all results add up to 100% as not all respondents answered every question.

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Oxford School of Hospitality Management, June 2016

Profile:

Community	Total		Female	Male
Finance	40	40%	41%	49%
RM	14	14%	19%	13%
IT	6	6%	4%	8%
Consultant	18	18%	15%	10%
Other	22	22%	22%	21%
	100	100%	100%	100%

The 'other' category included academics, suppliers and recruitment consultants. Some who categorised themselves here could have been classified in the community areas, which perhaps raises queries for Hospa about identity. There was a higher proportion of females and males in RMs and Consultants than for Financial managers.

The age split was:

Age profile	Total	Female	Male	Finance	RM	Cons
over 60	17.9%	3.7%	28.2%	13.8%		37.5%
50 - 60	23.9%	22.2%	25.6%	37.9%		37.5%
40 - 49	25.4%	29.6%	23.1%	31.0%	18.2%	25.0%
30 - 39	25.4%	29.6%	23.1%	17.2%	63.6%	
under 30	7.5%	14.8%	0.0%		18.2%	

Where do people work?

Eleven respondents worked internationally and 45% worked in a 'UK capital city'. There were some gender variations:

UK by gender	Total	Female	Male
UK - capital city	51%	37%	58%
Other UK city	14%	17%	14%
Rest of UK	35%	46%	28%
UK total	100%	40%	60%

A third worked in an operational unit, and slightly more in a head or area office (the remainder either did not answer or worked independently/in a different type of operation). For those in the hotels sector, seven respondents worked in hotels with more than 600 bedrooms, with a fairer gender split than in previous results – in 2010 only one female worked in this size compared to 3 in 2015. Another 9 respondents worked in hotels of 300-599 rooms, but with fewer females than 2010 (then five, now 2), although the numbers are still too low for meaningful comparison. The 26 five star hotels were split almost equally between male and female. Twenty two of the hotels generated sales of more than £50m, and another 10 over £30m.

Only 14% had more than 10 staff reporting directly to them, with the majority (60%) having less than 5 reporting staff.

Half of the hotels were part of a chain, and apart from a few franchised these were split roughly equally between those that were management contract and those owned and managed. The other half were independently owned, with most being independently managed without a brand affiliation.

Systems and communication:

Half said they used the Uniform System layout, with only 17% saying they definitely did not.

Two-thirds of the hotels are self-accounting, with the majority including statutory accounting. Only 16% of respondents said they were fully centralised. Despite this, many respondents said that some of their systems were centralised, which appears somewhat contradictory, as below:

Payments	44%	Procurement	51%
Banking	34%	Risk management	55%
Credit approval	49%	Insurances	67%
Purchase ledger/payables	37%	Tax compliance	67%
Payroll	32%	Systems management	64%
Internal audit	46%		

Outsourcing, despite predictions as to the growth of this, has remained less popular, with only payroll, TV systems and energy management (each 16%) showing any popularity. Housekeeping, another prime area for outsourcing, showed only 11%.

Although many of the current commentators emphasise the importance of social media as a method of communication, it is not popular within management teams, with only 3 respondents saying they used Twitter, and 2 using Facebook. Almost all used email, and the vast majority (85%) used face-to-face communication via management meetings, plus both landline telephone (80%) and mobile (82%).

Experience:

Eighty-four percent have worked more than 10 years in the industry, 34% with the same company.

more than 10 years	Total	Female	Male		Finance	RM	Cons
in the industry	83.6%	77.8%	89.7%		93.1%	72.7%	100.0%
in the company	34.3%	25.9%	41.0%		44.8%	9.1%	37.5%
in this position	19.4%	18.5%	20.5%		27.6%		37.5%

Another 25% have been in the same position for over 5 years, with only 13% having less than a year in post. All question respondents said they had operational experience, and all had also worked outside the industry.

Qualifications:

Fifty-seven percent had a degree of some sort, with females more likely to have a degree in hospitality than males. Almost a third had a professional accounting qualification. Eight respondents overall said they had no qualifications.

Qualifications	Total	Female	Male		Finance	RM	Cons.
Degree/HND in hospitality	32.3%	50.0%	21.1%		21.4%	36.4%	50.0%
Degree/HND in accounting or finance	7.7%	7.7%	7.9%		14.3%		
Other degree	16.9%	7.7%	23.7%		10.7%	9.1%	25.0%
Masters degree	12.3%	11.5%	13.2%		10.7%		37.5%
Other postgraduate qualification	9.2%	3.8%	13.2%				37.5%
Professional accounting qualification	32.3%	34.6%	31.6%		46.4%		25.0%

Qualifications – comparisons	2015		2010	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Degree/HND in hospitality	50.0%	21.1%	31.8%	30.6%
Degree/HND in accounting or finance	7.7%	7.9%	13.6%	17.3%
Other degree	7.7%	23.7%	13.6%	19.2%
Masters degree	11.5%	13.2%	13.6%	17.3%
Professional accounting qualification	34.6%	31.6%	45.5%	48.1%

When compared with the 2010 results, there seems to be some major changes, with a shift away from hospitality, and fewer respondents overall saying they had any type of degree. Given the increasing emphasis on degree education this is somewhat surprising, so these results should be treated with caution.

When asked about the future importance of qualifications, 89% said that a specialist degree would be important for the future, with a similar percentage confirming the importance of a hospitality degree. Only 6% thought that professional qualifications would not be important, with no real differences between disciplines. At Masters level, a fifth did not see this level as having importance, with the highest proportion (two thirds) saying it might have 'some', with a roughly equal balance between specialist masters (hospitality or finance) or general management (eg. MBA). Professional membership was seen as far more important, with over 90% seeing this as important in the future. There were slight differences when split by gender, with females more in favour of achieving qualifications than males, a softening from ten years ago when the emphasis was much stronger.

Many have undergone formal management training, although more than a third said that they had received none at all.

Management training?	Total	Female	Male
Yes, general management	32.8%	25.9%	38.5%
Yes, my functional area	34.3%	44.4%	28.2%
Yes, another functional area	13.4%	18.5%	7.7%

For professional development, 45% had undergone a few days training over the previous year, with a quarter having had more than 5 days. Females had undergone more than males overall. Disappointingly, 30% had received no professional development in 2015. By discipline, two thirds (65.5%) of finance people had undertaken some professional development, compared to 75% of consultants and 72.7% of revenue managers. For personal development, 45% had received support for undertaking other activities, with significantly more females (38% compared to 13% males) saying they had also been provide with resources. More than 50% overall said that this type of support was 'not part of our culture', with revenue managers less likely to be encouraged to undertake this.

Forty percent of respondents could converse in other languages, often at a basic level and usually a European language. More than two thirds of respondents almost always worked more than 5 hours overtime per week, with no difference in gender. The few consultants who responded to this question appeared to work significantly more overtime than the other two broad categories.

Skills and attributes:

Questions were asked about the importance of a range of technical and managerial skills in their role. There were some gender differences which would be interesting to explore further in future.

Skills in order of importance	Very	Some	Gender split
Communication	98.5%	0.0%	
Problem solving	95.5%	3.0%	
Planning	85.1%	13.4%	
Organisation	80.6%	17.9%	Females: more important (90%: 77%)
Team work	77.6%	20.9%	
Strategy/goal setting	77.6%	19.4%	
Leadership	77.6%	20.9%	
Negotiation	64.2%	29.9%	Females: more important (74%: 59%)
Development self and others	61.2%	34.3%	
Customer-focused	52.2%	34.3%	
Innovation	49.3%	41.8%	Males: more important (54%: 44%)
Cultural awareness	49.3%	44.8%	Males: more important (56%: 41%)
Presentations	35.8%	50.7%	Females: more important (67%: 59%)

Comparisons between disciplines presented some variations:

Very important	Finance	RM	Cons.
Organisation	82.8%	72.7%	62.5%
Team work	89.7%	45.5%	62.5%
Leadership	82.8%	45.5%	87.5%
Planning	82.6%	81.8%	87.5%
Negotiation	82.1%	54.5%	85.7%
Customer-focused	48.3%	36.4%	87.5%
Innovation	48.3%	27.3%	75.0%
Cultural awareness	51.7%	27.3%	50.0%

If not categorised as 'Very Important', the above skills generally had 'Some Importance' for the majority of respondents. Consultants had much stronger responses than other disciplines.

Salaries and benefits:

Questions were again asked about the scale of salaries. Overall results are given, showing that generally more males are paid in the higher scales, which may well reflect the higher proportion of males working in London & other UK capital cities, where salary levels are perceived to be higher. By discipline, finance is paid at much higher rates overall than is revenue management. The consultants split is shown, but this is based on a very few respondents as many declined to answer this question.

Salaries	Total	Female	Male		Finance	RM	Cons.
Over £60,000	35%	28%	40%		44.0%	27.3%	28.6%
£40,000 - £60,000	26%	12%	37%		36.0%	28.2%	28.6%
£25,000 - £40,000	25%	40%	14%		12.0%	45.5%	
less than £25,000	5%	12%	6%		4.0%		

(note: several respondents to other questions opted not to answer this question, hence not =100%)

Benefits – by gender	Total	Female	Male
Meals on duty	63.5%	80.0%	54.1%
Company sick pay	71.4%	72.0%	73.0%
Private health insurance	63.5%	68.0%	62.2%
Company pension	73.0%	76.0%	73.0%
Maternity leave (company paid)	30.2%	56.0%	13.5%
Paternity leave (company paid)	38.1%	24.0%	48.6%
Company car (or allowance)	27.0%	20.0%	32.4%
Free parking	47.6%	60.0%	40.5%
Season ticket loan/subsidised	27.0%	36.0%	21.6%
Health or leisure club	22.2%	24.0%	21.6%
Free or discounted laundry/dry cleaning	41.3%	32.0%	48.6%
Clothing allowance or uniform	15.9%	16.0%	16.2%
Mobile phone	60.3%	68.0%	56.8%
Laptop/tablet	58.7%	56.0%	62.2%
Professional subscriptions	63.5%	72.0%	59.5%
Personal sabbatical period (paid/unpaid)	7.9%	4.0%	10.8%
Paid study leave	17.5%	28.0%	8.1%
Unpaid study leave	6.3%	4.0%	8.1%
Professional education fees (most/all)	30.2%	40.0%	24.3%
Professional education fees (some)	15.9%	16.0%	16.2%
Company discounts	58.7%	60.0%	59.5%
Creche or subsidised child care	15.9%	32.0%	5.4%

Benefits - by discipline	Finance	RM	Cons.
Meals on duty	75.9%	54.5%	20.0%
Company sick pay	75.9%	90.9%	
Private health insurance	79.3%	36.4%	60.0%
Company pension	89.7%	54.5%	
Maternity leave (company paid)	27.6%	54.5%	
Paternity leave (company paid)	48.3%	45.5%	
Company car (or allowance)	31.0%	27.3%	40.0%
Free parking	65.5%	45.5%	
Season ticket loan/subsidised	24.1%	45.5%	
Health or leisure club	31.0%	27.3%	
Free or discounted laundry/dry cleaning	51.7%	54.5%	
Clothing allowance or uniform	13.8%	9.1%	20.0%
Mobile phone	62.1%	63.6%	60.0%
Laptop/tablet	58.6%	54.5%	60.0%
Professional subscriptions	79.3%	54.5%	40.0%
Personal sabbatical period (paid/unpaid)	13.8%	9.1%	
Paid study leave	20.7%	27.3%	
Unpaid study leave	10.3%		
Professional education fees (most/all)	34.5%	27.3%	
Professional education fees (some)	24.1%	18.2%	
Company discounts	65.5%	81.8%	
Creche or subsidised child care	20.7%	27.3%	

All except 9 respondents said they had a bonus scheme, the rest being based on a combination of personal, unit and company performance, with less emphasis on departmental performance.

For further information by job groupings, please see the separate reports. If you would like more detail on any of the findings, or any other aspects of my research, please email me on clburgess@brookes.ac.uk.